

Sirwaitis, Sherri

From: Shieh1 <shieh1@aol.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 29, 2014 12:13 AM
To: Williams, Nancy; Moore, Andrew; Bojo, Leah; Harden, Joi; Tiemann, Donna; Gerbracht, Heidi; Anderson, Greg; Sirwaitis, Sherri
Subject: Re: C14-2013-0136 / 3215 Exposition Boulevard

Dear Council Members,

Re: C14-2013-0136 / 3215 Exposition Boulevard

There has been a long history of discussions about the future of this property. Ideally the State School site's Master Plan is completed first, then how this site fits is determined. Because things do not always happen in the order we would like, as stewards of a community, we can only do our best to approach it in the most thoughtful way. As a resident of this neighborhood I wanted to express my thoughts about what is important to consider and what fits.

Before jumping into what anyone wants, it is important to consider what the master plans envision. This hierarchy begins with Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan and trickles down to other plans which springboard from it. Of interest is Project Connect's Transit Plan. In its Central Corridor Study, 35th Street and Mopac is shown as a key transit hub. As a "transit oriented district" there is great potential to create a well thought out master plan. In addition, the State School site would provide for a clean slate for the creation of such a district. Placing zoning of more intense use closest to the center of the hub would suggest a tapering down of uses and density as it got closer to the neighborhood. This works well since it allows the intense development to be compatible with the existing neighborhood.

To additionally cue in to what the bordering use/zoning could be, one could simply look at the patterns which currently exist in the area. Across the street from the single family homes on 35th street, bordering on Camp Mabry, are townhome developments. The typology works well and buffers an area of very different use. Following this pattern across the street from the homes on Exposition would seem logical and fitting.

Of additional consideration, however, is the implementation of some sort of planned streetscape. With the State School presenting a clean slate and bordering so much of the frontage, so much can be done to create a connected, vibrant, multi-modal transit frontage. The new "Complete Streets Policy" begins to talk about this. With the variety of uses along Exposition (residential, civic, schools, commercial) and space to sculpt the streetscape, Exposition Blvd. could prove to be a model implementation area. To ensure that the property in discussion has room to integrate into the State School Master Plan and also the planned streetscape, it would be prudent to provide a deeper setback. Many homes in the area have a 50' setback which could be precedence for amount of setback.

As it looks to me, and for which I would easily support, an SF6 townhome development with 50' front setback would fit the area well. For me, any other typology or more intense zoning would require consideration of measurable community benefits and how the building's integration into the sloping site still maintains respectable massing to the neighborhood's views.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

James Shieh
 2901 Windsor Road